April 2020 NAPB Board Meeting

Minutes

Attendees: Peggy Ozias-Akins, Ksenija Gasic, Don Jones, Dave Bubeck, Jody Scheffler, Klaus Koehler, Dan Packer, Rob Duncan, Chandler Levinson, Stephen Baenzinger, Kaitlyn Smejdir, Valerio Hoyos Vllegas, Emily Ziemke, Donn Cummings, Todd Campbell, Alex Lipka

Excused: Mikey Kantar (PBCC),

*Approve minutes from Jan meeting* – Ksenija Gasic

* Peggy O-A provided edits. Minutes approved with the changes. Motion to accept the minutes by Dave Bubeck, second by D. Jones.

*Financials –* Don Jones

* $192K balance with the investment made. ~$20K outstanding balance. So, the budget is about #170K which is higher than this time year ago.

***Standing Committee reports***

*Membership –Valerio H-V – twitter campaign outcome*

* Membership committee report distributed. Progress on membership renewal and recruitment: after the meeting membership is usually lower and stays like that for a few months, this year is a bit different dip is shorter which is good. Goal is to increase numbers by 15% to have total above 400. If the trend continues it will be achieved. Will see how COVID-19 affects that. We are gaining mostly in student members (from 134 to 144) and small decrease in professional members (from 304 to 301).
* Twitter campaign results: 37-day period campaign. 432.4K impressions. 3.7% engagement rate ~13K people interested in the content. If the increase is directly related to the campaign we recovered money spent for this activity. Multiple people commented that they are supported of NAPB even though they are not plant breeders by profession. Most people were seeking information on what plant breeding is and that is something that should be more accessible on the web page.

*Advocacy* – Emily Ziemke - Advocacy priorities:

* Two students attended congressional visits day. Their impressions were distributed. Summary of the survey has also been provided. Funding had the top priority:
* Advocate for funding of public sector breeding, including for specialty crops that don't have a commodity group or large private sector presence.
* Advocate for funding of pre-breeding and germplasm characterization
* Advocate for funding for applied plant breeding (in the vein of the AFRI advanced TY RFP), with a target of hybrid/inbred/variety releases.

*Education* – Rob Duncan

* Committee meeting minutes distributed. Email regarding webinars are distributed, in collaboration with GSWG.
* Webinar on April 2nd was run by graduate student and had unfortunate problems that will be mitigated by registered attendance.
* Upcoming webinar on IP May 12th.
* Working on electronic voting system for posted judging. Written feedback is useful for student and that needs to be incorporated in the electronic voting system.
* POA – webinar program has been b=very active between three groups and on average 40 people are attending and after the recordings of webinars are posted

*Awards – Jim McFerson*

* *It is the time to start working on announcement of awards. We have last year nominations that are still valid for 2 more years.*
* *New award for private breeding impact award; total 4 awards.*
* *Need to plan for 4 talks at the annual meetings for awardees from each award*
* *Need to send an email announcement for the deadlines for nominations*
* ***Action item:*** *2019 awardees need to be added to the NAPB web page – Jim McF has everything ready*
* *Jodi* ***–*** *the information was in January newsletter*
* *Jim McFerson is member of National Genetic Resources Advisory Council (NGRAC); finally have new membership announced 13 members, additional 3 members that represent plant breeding; will provide some write up on this for newsletter.*
* *Klaus K. - commercial committee will collaborate with Jim McF. and provide the information for this committee.*

*Communication* – Jodi Scheffler

* Report has been distributed.
* Newsletter is near finished and looks really good. Need to have the write up regarding the awards to include to the newsletter. What’s the webinar on April 23rd?
* Emily Z. - Science communication
* By the end of the week newsletter will be reviewed and next week posted. Is everything ok with the emails received via email list? There was a problem with one member. So, if anyone has a problem need to inform the communication committee.
* Communication is appropriate and email frequency is ok. Number of younger members say that they do not check their emails often.

*Commercial plant breeding group* – Klaus Koehler/

* Report has been distributed. Talks have been set up for meeting in Lincoln. Working with ASTA on graduate student internship. Prepared the proposal that was sent to EC for comments. It is flexible outline to be able to integrate it with different companies with broad areas of plant breeding. Duration of internship would be relatively small and in several instances. Commercial committee will be facilitator to try to match the grad student with the internships that the companies will develop. If EC is comfortable with this approach CC will continue developing this further.
* Peggy OA – good approach to partner with ASTA and to reach to smaller
* Dave B. – how is ASTA involved?
* They have new person that Klaus will talk next week with, she is working with membership and organizes graduate student activities so this will be part of that. ASTA does not have internship and this will fit right to their interest as well.
* Don C. - Seed Science Foundation would also be a good partner.
* Dave B. – idea is for NAPB to cooperate with different societies but for graduate student sot lead the initiative and activities.
* Todd C. – this proposal is of no cost for NAPB?
* Klaus K. – yes, it is of no cost for NAPB. We are not funding the internships, just facilitating the connection between students and companies. It will be stickily managed by the companies, NAPB will try to help match interest between students and company.
* Don C. - There might be a minor cost.
* Klaus K. - ASTA might help with some of it.
* Don C. – eventually the work of the committee needs to be institutional based and might come with the cost.
* Klaus K. – right now 6-7 companies interested so we might match 1-2 students per company just to get started.
* Peggy OA – it would be good to have NAPB as conduit.
* Klaus K. – it would be joint activity between NAPB and ASTA.

*Borlaug scholar* – Don Jones/Donn Cummings

* Reports distributed. 5 undergraduates and XX graduate students applied
* Contacted ASTA regarding support as they have the change of personnel/leadership and got confirmation that they will continue to support Borlaug scholarship. Application number is down which is not surprising with uncertainty of the meeting. Quality of the applicants especially from graduate students are exceptional.
* Dave B. – even if the Lincoln meeting does not happen in person we should award the Borlaug scholarship since mentorship can happen online and in virtual environment.
* There is still a need for mentors so please sign on the NAPB web page.
* Peggy OA. – Jodi can send the reminder for mentorship sign up.

*PBCC* – K. Gasic for M. Kantar.

* Received comments for renewal document. Submitted document to the regional office. Award submission package was not chosen but good suggestion for improvement received.
* Suggestion to add information about IP accomplishments, web page, paper etc. from PBCC to the UPOV IP webinar on May 12th s viewers can access it especially those that will be viewing recorded webinar.
* **Action item** – KG to prepare the slide with information and send it to Klaus K. He will make sure that presenter gets it and that it is included it in the presentation.

*Graduate Student Working Group* – Chandler Levinson

* Reports provided and distributed. Website will be updated.

*Early Career Working Group* – Amanda Hulse-Kemp/Dan Packer

* Limit on participant via zoom is 100. Need to check the subscription type to avoid problem. Average attendance is 40 but last time there were 91 attendees.

**Old business**

*2020 meeting* –Stephen Baenziger, Kaitlyn Smejdir – COVID-19 contingency plans

* Discussion whether to have annual meeting virtually. May 15 is the first drop dead date to decide if the meeting will be moved. Idea is to have combined meeting. Not sure yet if the town will be open by the time of the meeting. Not certain if people would want to fly. It will be discussed in detailed on Friday this week among the organizing committee. Sentiment is to have the meeting on site and provide online attendance for those that are concerned about travel.
* Peggy OA – were there any discussions with hotel regarding the required rooms if people decide to attend virtually?
* Kaitlyn – 20% reduction is already part of the contract. No additional discussion with hotel.
* Donn C. – how will registration be affected if the meeting is mixed or virtual? If you are on site register for full thing. Remotely there will be fee. Zoom subscription that UNL has, has 300 participant limit so we might need to go with the different platform. We don’t know how the registration is going because it is done via Tri-Societies.
* Early registration ends 15 May. Something needs to be posted on the NAPB web site. Universities have different policies for travel implemented. How will it affect exhibitors? Some of the rules from companies and Universities will probably be relaxed as the meeting comes close. Beginning of May will probably start opening some businesses and states but if there is another spike of COVID-19 that might shut it down completely.
* Katlyn S. – There are different financial consequences depending on when and to what extent activities are reduced or canceled with hotel.
* Dave B – do you know what % speakers are from NE? Stephen B. about 40% If some of the speakers can remotely present that would save the money to organizers. The decision to go or no go will be done by the NAPB as the NAPB are organizers, and NE are local organizers. NE is committed to have the meeting. Option is going virtual, or having it as hybrid.
* Kaitlyn S. – restriction right now is for number of people allowed to gather, max 10.
* Donn C. – the decision if the meeting will be organized or not has to be done soon. The meeting as usual is probably off the table. So NAPB EC needs facts form the local site to make a decision if it will be hybrid or d=fully virtual
* Todd C – is the NE group open for organizing meeting next year? Stephen B. – we are open to any option but would think that it would be in the interest of the NAPB to have the meeting.
* Jodi S. - Federal employees have until June 2nd to register. There has to be fee even if the meeting is virtual.
* Stephen B. – catastrophic insurance on the meeting has not been taken. There will still be cost for organizing the meeting.
* Jodi S. – It might be good to still have the rooms for meeting rented even if the meeting is virtual.
* Peggy OA – details need to be investigated. Check with hotel and see what can be negotiated.
* Don J. – As we get closer to August meeting we need as much time as possible as it will get very confusing very quickly. Uncertainty will be for at least about 8 weeks.
* Dave B. – our next NAPB EC call is may 19th. If we can get the hotel to delay the drop date till June 1st so we can make final call at our EC meeting in May to decide if the hotel is complete drop or some partial way. If we push the final decision till May 19th what are the facts that we need to have?
* Peggy OA - The cost of dropping the hotel will fall on NAPB.
* Don J. – if hotel does not move the deadline to June 1 EC meeting should be moved before the deadline so we can make the decision.
* **Action item** for Stephen B. to gather all information and provide to EC. If the deadline is not extended EC meeting is going to be moved to make decision before the deadline.
* Stephen B. - it is about $50K cost to the hotel if we cancel the meeting. Kaitlyn S. - If we use some of their services that # could be reduced by the cost of the services that we use.
* Don J. – it might be easier to do it either in person or completely virtual. Hybrid option seems to be most complicated.
* Kaitlyn S. – mixed model is mostly if we decide that meeting will be in person so for those people that want to attend virtually to have that option. If virtual attendance is cheaper many people might opt to choose it.
* Amanda H-K – plant breeding symposium has used mixed model.
* Valerio – Cornell had one Corteva Plant Breeding Symposium meeting recently were held virtually and it went well.
* Peggy OA – Question about fundraising?
* Stephen B. – not yet fully engaged in fundraising because of the uncertainty of the meeting.
* Jodi S. – attended 2 virtual meetings that were supposed to be in person. Corporate sponsors got some value for their sponsorship via video/promotion option. That is something we can implement.

Minutes taken by Ksenija Gasic.

Meeting adjourned 2:34pm CST/3:34 EST.